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Against Imperialism.

SPEECH
OF
HON. HUGH A. DINSMORE,
OF ARKANSAS,
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Monday, February 5, 1900.

The House being in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, and having under consideration the bill (H. R. 7341) making appropriations for the diplomatic and consular service for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1901—

Mr. DINSMORE said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: As has been stated by the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the bill which has been reported from that committee has but few changes from the law of appropriations of last year for the diplomatic and consular service, and those changes are such as were suggested and demanded by changed conditions since the former law was enacted. Therefore, there is no necessity for any discussion of the measure in itself. It has been reported to the House unanimously from the committee. But, sir, I desire to avail myself of this opportunity to submit a few observations upon the general conditions in the country in relation to foreign affairs and in relation to our Government's action toward its recently acquired possessions or those which it is now struggling to acquire.

I will read, in the first place, Mr. Chairman, from the President's annual message sent to Congress at the beginning of the present session, in which we find this language:

The withdrawal of the authority of Spain from the island of Cuba was effected by the 1st of January, so that the full reestablishment of peace found the relinquished territory held by us in trust for the inhabitants, maintaining, under the direction of the Executive, such government and control therein as should conserve public order, restore the productive conditions of peace so long disturbed by the instability and disorder which prevailed for the greater part of the preceding three decades, and build up that tranquil development of the domestic state whereby alone can be realized the high purpose, as proclaimed in the joint resolution adopted by the Congress on the 19th of April, 1898, by which the United States disclaimed any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty, jurisdiction, or control over Cuba, except for the pacification thereof, and asserted its determination when that was accomplished to leave the government and control of the island to its people. The pledge contained in this resolution is of the highest honorable obligation and must be sacredly kept.

So said the President of the United States, and when he used this language I believe that he earnestly felt what he uttered, that it was his purpose, so far as he was able as the Chief Executive, to see that the faith pledged in the resolution of Congress that he recites should be kept by this Government. In connection with this message, I want to call the attention of the House to one or two incidents. Just after it was sent to Congress by the



President the Committee on Rules, which has complete control of procedure in the House, reported a resolution creating a new committee to take jurisdiction of certain legislative matters.

That committee was styled, is styled, the Committee on Insular Affairs. It was supposedly created to take jurisdiction of matters appertaining to the undisputed territory of the United States. Prior to the creation of this committee the Committee on Foreign Affairs had jurisdiction of all things appertaining to the relations between the United States and Cuba. Presumably it was not done because of any doubt of the ability of the Foreign Affairs Committee to continue successfully to manage that business.

The resolution, before it was referred to the Committee on Rules and reported back, did not provide for the transfer of that jurisdiction to the Committee on Insular Affairs; but the Committee on Rules, for some reason best known to its members, provided by the resolution that the jurisdiction should be taken away from the Committee on Foreign Affairs. What was it, Mr. Chairman? What motive impelled them to that action? The Committee on Rules does not act without some purpose. The resolution as introduced in the House, before it was reported back by the Committee on Rules, did not provide for the transfer of the jurisdiction.

Why, I ask again, did they see proper to make such a transfer to the new committee from the Committee on Foreign Affairs? The new committee has its hands full of the business relative to other matters, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs is left with practically, at this time, nothing to do. I am glad that, since the Committee on Foreign Affairs is relieved of the business and it has gone to the Committee on Insular Affairs, a committee very able in its personnel, that our very able chairman [Mr. HITT] was made a member also of the new committee. I am not especially jealous of the fact that the jurisdiction has been taken away from the Committee on Foreign Affairs, but I deplore the fact that this action on the part of the Committee on Rules has an appearance of a purpose not to carry out the will of the President as expressed in his message, but to give color to a pretension which may be later boldly asserted, that we have rights in the island of Cuba beyond the pledge of Congress, and, in violation of it, that there is an ultimate purpose to destroy the liberties which our men fought for at Santiago and achieved for the Cubans. I do not impute to any particular person bad motives.

I do not say that men act dishonestly; I believe there is not a gentleman in this House who, if confronted with the proposition contained in the President's language with reference to Cuba, would not assert that that is the purpose of Congress. He would resent indignantly any imputation that he had any other purpose, but at the same time it is in the atmosphere and we hear it on all hands that other things will happen; doubts are expressed, not only by the ordinary individual in the common walks of life, but by men of official character, although not making the statement officially, as to whether the United States Government will ever relinquish its hold on the island of Cuba.

Why all this talk, Mr. Chairman, about who shall haul down the flag? It is as applicable to Cuba as it is to the Philippines. Who shall haul it down, they say, where once its folds have sheltered any territory? It must be left and never pulled down. I myself have heard from individuals the assertion that we never will abandon Cuba. We are told that we dare not leave the

Philippines to themselves; that they are incapable of self-government. Are they more so than the Cubans? Admiral Dewey has told us they are less so.

Now, let us consider the conditions in Cuba and in the Philippines at the outbreak of the war and compare them with each other.

Mr. BOUTELL of Illinois. Will the gentleman allow me a moment?

Mr. DINSMORE. Certainly.

Mr. BOUTELL of Illinois. I should be glad if the gentleman from Arkansas, in this connection, would state whether he would be in favor of the annexation of Cuba if the people of Cuba so voted.

Mr. DINSMORE. Mr. Chairman, I say to the gentleman that I have for a long time, as a citizen of this country, felt a desire that at some time we should possess the island of Cuba; and if at any time I recognized that there had been a full, free, fair, untrammelled expression of a desire on the part of the Cuban people themselves to be admitted into this Union, they coming in with a proper form of government to entitle them to admission, and their people were prepared for it, I would favor it. I will say furthermore to my friend that never would I favor any such method as that adopted when the Hawaiian Islands were annexed, when the people of those islands were not consulted—nobody, practically, except a lot of missionaries, traders, and commercial adventurers.

Mr. BOUTELL of Illinois. I referred simply to a full and complete vote on the part of the people of Cuba, asking for admission.

Mr. DINSMORE. Well, I have answered the gentleman as definitely as I could and, I hope, to his satisfaction. I do not want to be drawn beyond the limits which I have set for myself in this discussion and which I propose to follow in a general and brief way.

But if the flag can not be pulled down in the Philippines because the honor of the nation is involved, and so it is said; if we have pledged to civilization anything in behalf of the inhabitants of the Philippines, is it not fully so with regard to the Cubans? There is at least this to be said: With reference to Cuba, we defined what honor demands, in the name of liberty, by Congressional action. Yet it seems, according to the President, that honor demands one thing in Cuba and another in the Philippines. Admiral Dewey has told us that the Filipinos are more capable of self-government than the Cubans. He has said that he is familiar with the two peoples and that in his view the inhabitants of the Philippine Islands are more capable of self-government than the Cubans. Is not liberty as dear to one as to the other?

Mr. Chairman, the Cubans and the Filipinos have suffered under the same cruel oppression and tyranny of the same despotic power. When we went to their relief the people of Cuba were in insurrection against that tyranny and so were the Filipinos, each having organized armies, the army of the Filipinos the larger one and more capable and better armed than that of Cuba, both struggling for liberty with the same cause, the same justification exactly, though their interests and revolutionary actions were not mutual.

When Cuba, which is nearer to our own borders, sent up her cries of distress, drawn forth by Spanish persecutions, which were unheeded, the people of the United States, after patient and earnest protests, demanded that action should be taken on the part of this Government in their behalf.

Why? For the purpose of territorial acquisition? Not at all; that we specifically disavowed; but because the condition of suffering, distress, and oppression in Cuba appealed to the sympathy of the most liberty-loving people on earth, a people who have established for themselves a government under which liberty abounds and whose people desire to see it enjoyed by all who aspire to independence and freedom. By a solemn resolution of Congress we declared that they were and of right ought to be free and independent; we invoked the power of this great Government to make them so; and for fear of that spirit of greed which dwells in the minds of men grasping after money, we provided in that resolution that it was not the purpose of the United States to carry on a war of conquest or to exercise any dominion or control in the island of Cuba, but to give those people freedom and then to withdraw our forces.

The country is familiar with conditions existing in Cuba at the outbreak of hostilities, and the official correspondence of our consular officers on file in the State Department, published with other important correspondence, which I shall allude to hereafter, in Senate Document 62, has informed us equally well the state of affairs in the Philippines. The conditions were exactly similar. Consul Williams, writing from Manila to the State Department on February 22, 1898, said:

Peace was proclaimed, * * * but there is no peace and has been none for about two years. Conditions here and in Cuba are practically alike. War exists, battles are of almost daily occurrence, and ambulances bring in many wounded, and hospitals are full. Prisoners are brought here and shot without trial, and Manila is under martial law.

Writing again, March 19, 1898, Mr. Williams said:

Insurrection is rampant; many killed, wounded, and made prisoners on both sides. A battle ship, the *Don Juan de Austria*, sent this week to the northern part of Luzon to cooperate with a land force of 2,000, dispatched to succor local forces, overwhelmed by rebels.

* * * * *
Rebellion never more threatening to Spain. Rebels getting arms, money and friends, and they outnumber the Spaniards, resident and soldiery, probably a hundred to one.

In his letter of March 27, Mr. Williams said:

Cuban conditions exist here possibly in aggravated form. Spanish soldiers are killed and wounded daily, despite claimed pacification, and the hospitals are kept full.

When our forces are to be withdrawn I can not say; no other gentleman can say; but I hope it may be early. Yet I have grave fears that it will be never, notwithstanding the President's message, saying our "pledge is of the highest honorable obligation and must be sacredly kept." We know his and his party's purpose in the Philippines, and we doubt. People who will not recognize a moral obligation because it is not evidenced by a sealed contract may easily find a way to break the terms of a written bond, especially so when the reasons assigned for the justification of the one are, if true at all, which I deny, equally applicable to the other. What great differences exist that we are impelled on the one hand to act in the name of liberty and on the other for the purpose of oppression and in denial of freedom?

Mr. PEARCE of Missouri. If the gentleman will allow me—

Mr. DENSMORE. Certainly. I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. PEARCE of Missouri. I do not desire to interrupt the thread of my friend's argument, but his views are always interesting to me, and I would like him before he concludes his

remarks to elaborate an affirmative proposition as to what, in his judgment, would be a proper solution of the Philippine problem.

Mr. DINSMORE. I shall be very glad to do so, and I do not know that there will be a better opportunity than the present, because I have no prepared speech to deliver.

Let us take a retrospect for only a moment. If there are any embarrassments or difficulties presented to us to-day in withdrawing our forces from those islands or in taking a position which does not look to ultimate and permanent sovereignty, that condition is due to the fault of ourselves, and not to the inhabitants of the Philippine Islands.

But whatever the embarrassment may be to-day, I say, without hesitation so far as I am concerned, that in respect to every tradition of this Government, with respect to our Constitution, with respect to the Declaration of Independence, which breathes a holy assertion of the principles of liberty and the rights of all men to participate in their own government and control, in view of our own interests, commercial and industrial, this Government should officially say now—we having failed to say it formerly, as we should have done—to those people who are in arms against the United States: “It is not our purpose to acquire permanent sovereignty over you. It is not our purpose to hold you in subjection and to force upon you a government to which you yourselves have objected. We will not do so. We offer to you our friendly assistance to restore peace and order and to establish a government of your own.”

That is what they expected of us in the beginning; and if that proposition had been made to them at any time during the progress of this war, it is my belief that they would have come to terms and laid down their arms, and there would have been a cessation of hostilities. And having done this, I would make a treaty with that government on the part of the United States and withdraw from it and no longer be responsible for it otherwise than as provided for in that treaty. [Applause on the Democratic side.]

That is easy of accomplishment. Why not? What peculiar obligations rest upon us that will prevent us from doing that?

There are two arguments used, two reasons assigned on the part of the annexationists. The one is in the name of civilization and alleged humanitarianism, the other in the name of trade and commerce. These two alone.

The speeches we hear are not arguments directed to reason: they are appeals to sentiment, to the hearts of the people, their love for the flag, and they charge us with interfering with the progress of American arms, and we have been branded in the yellow journals, and even by men in high official station, as “traitors” and “copperheads.”

Mr. Chairman, the flag is a prolific theme. The mere mention of the flag of our country stirs the hearts of all Americans. When an appeal is made in its name by the sophist, it reaches the unreflecting and carries them away at times. Who does not love the flag! We love it because it is the emblem of liberty: because it is the ensign under which this great country has grown in prosperity and wealth and happiness and power; because it stands for the liberty of the individual citizen and for the right of the people to govern themselves, and never, until this new era of dishonor, has it ever been emblematic of anything else.

“Who will haul it down?” I should say that a President of the

United States, loving that flag for itself and every association, loving it because it means the best things that have ever been accomplished in this country—and if the simple principles of our Constitution and our system of government are adhered to, as in the past, it means more and greater growth in happiness and material prosperity—that that President, unwilling that the flag should stand for anything other than is consistent with our professions in the past, our life as a nation and a people, should, by his own order, have it taken down where it means the subjugation of any people on earth against their own will. [Applause on the Democratic side.]

My friend from Pennsylvania [Mr. SIBLEY] the other day made a very happy and eloquent speech as an annexationist. I listened to him with a great deal of pleasure. I always do. I have for him the kindest feeling of affection, and my admiration of his speech on that occasion was not in the least disparaged by the fact that I knew he could make just as eloquent a speech and a much stronger one upon the other side of the question, and probably will before he is two years older. I am justified in making that statement by the fact that I have heard him make very able speeches on two sides of a question quite as important as this since I have been in Congress.

He glorifies the flag. He says that he is an optimist, and I truly think he is, in the superlative degree. I can not, like him, plant myself on hope alone, and without reference to practical conditions, in disregard of the operation of legal and constitutional restraints, forgetting our best and holiest traditions, bidding defiance to the things that have wrecked governments in other lands and other ages, declare my belief "that on this continent God has willed to plant a people who shall carry the arts of peace and the story of the cross to the nations of the earth" and at the same time offer the sword and the bayonet as the instruments of that achievement. God hath said, "They that live by the sword shall perish by the sword."

My friend used this language with reference to Rome, which I recall, and quote from the RECORD:

Mr. Speaker, we have held up to us for warning the history of Persia and Greece, of Babylon and Rome. They have flourished and have faded. They had their morning hour and their meridian and went out in the blackness of night. Rome expanded until, like a wheel, the spokes radiated from the hub throughout Europe, Asia and Africa. The collapse of her power and of every empire of the past came not from the weakness of the periphery of the wheel, but from the rottenness of the hub.

Mr. Chairman, that is exactly what we, of conservative position upon this question, desire to prevent for our own country—the rotting of the hub. The gentleman is correct, but when the periphery was extended to such remote bounds, when so many spokes were crowded into the hub, when an enormous military establishment became necessary to keep in subjection and order all this wide domain over which Rome exercised control, then it was that the possibility arose for corruptions to begin at the center of government and the hub became strained and split and cracked and rotten, and the whole Empire came tumbling down, a mighty heap of ruin upon the heads of people who had enjoyed liberty before.

We would pursue a conservative, safe course in this country. We desire to refrain from expanding our dominion away out into the islands of the sea, because we believe it is dangerous; because we believe the creation of great standing armies is not only expensive and a drain upon the substance of the people, but that it im-

perits their liberties; because we believe that it tempts the jealousy of other nations and makes us a party to the contest going on in the great Orient for the possession of territory when we do not need it for our own uses.

I do not believe, Mr. Chairman, in the theory of commerce by military establishment. I believe that commerce follows peace. I do not believe in the trade of the bayonet; I believe in the trade of the pen and countinghouse. I do not believe in the trade of the man-of-war with bristling cannon; I believe in the trade of the ship that flies under the white sails of peace and friendship and thrift and competition, bearing our commerce to every clime and offering it to the world upon terms which are reciprocally beneficial to it and to us. This is the true theory of commerce, and no other can be justified. By it we maintain peace and friendly relations with all the world. By the other we constantly hazard the liberty of the people and endanger our Government to disturbances and embarrassments with foreign powers.

But, Mr. Chairman, I ask the House to reflect a moment upon the theory of commerce as a justification of the Administration's policy. If this war is being waged for money, that there shall be additional trade established for the benefit of those who sell and buy in this country, what is the price that we pay? It is not only the millions of dollars that go out from the Treasury to maintain permanent armies; it is not only the millions of dollars that will be necessary in the future to maintain colonies under military rule; not that alone: we are paying for it in the precious blood of our land. Who shall adjudge the value of an American soldier's life? Who shall place it in the scale with trade and dollars and material wealth?

Who shall say how many lives we will be justified in expending for the establishment of the trade which gentlemen value so highly? The soldier must do his duty. His duty is to obey orders, and the President is his officer of supreme command. No matter what the danger, what the cause. Soldiers know nothing of causes. When ordered to fight the Filipino, could they refuse?

Not tho' the soldier knew
Some one had blundered:
Theirs not to make reply,
Theirs not to reason why,
Theirs but to do and die.

Ah, Mr. Chairman, the blunders of this Administration have accomplished a fearful harvest of death. The Washington Post two days ago gave this telegram from San Francisco:

REMAINS OF 800 AMERICAN SOLDIERS.

SAN FRANCISCO, February 2, 1899.

A cable from Manila was received from the quartermaster's department stating that the *Hancock* sailed for San Francisco on January 19 with the bodies of 462 dead soldiers. The *Indiana* is expected in immediately with 200 bodies, and the *Ohio*, with 138, arrived to-day.

Over 800 dead soldiers brought back to their native land. Dead, Mr. Chairman and gentlemen. Dead, Mr. President and Messrs. Commissioners. Dead, as a logical, inevitable result of your blundering, grasping policy. Sacrifices offered up by this Administration in the name of trade, in the cause of greed, in the cause of a false and hypocritical philanthropy. I protest against it. Even this morning the gentleman from Indiana [Mr. ROBINSON] arose to announce that the gallant General Lawton to-day lies in his native city in state, with his comrades and his friends weeping about him.

That great life was given as a sacrifice, an enforced sacrifice, by this Administration to establish domination in the Philippine Islands. By what right are these 800 lives sacrificed? And there have been many more and there will be yet more. These boys who went away a few months ago under orders, and bearing upon their lips the parting kiss of sweetheart, sister, wife, and mother, followed a ross the seas by prayers of loved ones at home, are now returning cold and dead, bringing a pall of gloom into thousands of homes. Ten thousand weepers and mourners will stand about them, and pour out tears before the broken forms of those that "sleep the sleep that knows no waking." And may I be permitted to ask of the President, of every Republican in the country, and of my good friend from Pennsylvania, how many more American lives they feel justified in sacrificing, how many more homes shall be made desolate, in the name of trade and "mercy?"

That is the price that is being paid for the domination of the United States in the Philippines; that is the sacrifice that is being exacted by the President. Is it with the consent of the people? Was it done with the consent of Congress? Congress was not consulted in regard to the action to be taken in the Philippines. This calamitous condition was brought upon us by the action of the Administration, by the Executive and his officers.

He sent his commission to Paris to effect a treaty of peace. There was but one thing that stood as an obstruction to the speedy accomplishment of that purpose. They demanded cession of the Philippines. Under instructions, the American commissioners held the knife at the throat of a prostrate, beaten antagonist, and holding out \$20,000,000 as a bribe, added to intimidation, induced him to yield a reluctant consent: \$20,000,000 were given as consideration for the privilege or as a pretext to crush the Philippines and force them into subjection to this Government against their will; \$20,000,000 were paid for an excuse to sacrifice thousands of lives of Americans and islanders in the name of God and trade; and gentlemen call this "carrying the arts of peace and the story of the Cross to the nations of the earth."

How does this appear to you? What kind of sentiment does it engender, what feeling inspire, in view of all that was said and done in the cause of liberty for Cuba? Now, "honor" demands that we must wage cruel war against the Filipinos to force them to submit to that which under the dictates of honor we freed the Cubans of. So it runs all through, the same character of dissimulation and false pretense, for I must call it that; and they insist that we are now committed to it forever by the action of the Filipinos themselves, which is but adding one degree more of hypocrisy.

Mr. Chairman, when we have cited them to the fact that we gave the Filipinos cause to believe that we would assist them to independence, and that we sought and had their cooperation in fighting the Spaniards, that by their aid the Spaniard was crushed in Luzon, they say there was no cooperation. There was a practical alliance between our forces and Aguinaldo; but this, too, is denied.

A commission appointed by the President, in their "preliminary report," which was filed and referred to Congress by the President with his message, says there never was any cooperation. While battling for the liberty of the people in Cuba when we asserted the sovereign right of all men to control their own desti-

nies, or at least participate in that control, it became necessary to strike the enemy in the Orient.

He had a fleet in Manila Bay. He had garrisons in the Philippine Islands. All are familiar with our wonderful victory in Manila Bay. But while Dewey held the bay Aguinaldo and his patriot army pressed the land forces of the enemy to the very verge of the sea and could have taken the city of Manila any day. There was no cooperation say the commission. How came Aguinaldo there? Go to the official reports of our own officers and ascertain. United States Consul-General Pratt at Singapore held frequent interviews with Aguinaldo before the battle of Manila, and through him communication was had between Dewey and Aguinaldo, which led to the latter's accepting passage on a United States ship of war and going to Manila and taking command of the insurgent army by the assistance and advice of Admiral Dewey, who furnished him with arms.

Before Admiral Dewey left Hongkong for Manila Consul-General Pratt wired him from Singapore that Aguinaldo was willing to join him "for general cooperation, if desired." Those were the words. What was Dewey's answer? "Tell Aguinaldo come soon as possible." Aguinaldo arrived at Hongkong too late to go with Dewey, but so important was his presence and cooperation esteemed that by Dewey's orders he was taken on board the *McCulloch* and conveyed to Manila. What further evidence is there of cooperation? On July 4 Gen. Thomas Anderson, commanding the United States land forces, wrote to Aguinaldo, having been placed by Dewey at the head of the insurgent army, as follows:

General, I have the honor to inform you that the United States of America, whose land forces I have the honor to command in this vicinity, being at war with the Kingdom of Spain, has entire sympathy and most friendly sentiments for the native people of the Philippine Islands. For these reasons I desire to have the most amicable relations with you, and to have you and your people cooperate with us in military operations against the Spanish forces, etc.

Now, this same commission tells you that not until long after that, until after the Spaniards had been crushed, did Aguinaldo or his followers ever express a desire for independence. But here Admiral Dewey tells you in this dispatch to the Department, dated June 27, that he has gone to attend a meeting of the insurgent leaders for the purpose of forming a civil government.

DEWEY'S DISPATCH.

HONGKONG, June 27, 1898.

SECRETARY OF NAVY, Washington:

Receipt of telegram of June 14 is acknowledged. Aguinaldo, insurgent leader, with 13 of his staff, arrived May 19, by permission, on *Nanshan*. Established self Cavite, outside arsenal, under the protection of our guns, and organized his army. I have had several conferences with him, generally of a personal nature. Consistently I have refrained from assisting him in any way with the force under my command, and on several occasions I have declined requests that I should do so, telling him the squadron could not act until the arrival of the United States troops. At the same time I have given him to understand that I consider insurgents as friends, being opposed to a common enemy. He has gone to attend a meeting of insurgent leaders for the purpose of forming a civil government. Aguinaldo has acted independently of the squadron, but has kept me advised of his progress, which has been wonderful. I have allowed to pass by water recruits, arms, and ammunition, and to take such Spanish arms and ammunition from the arsenal as he needed. Have advised frequently to conduct the war humanely, which he has done invariably. * * * In my opinion, these people are far superior in their intelligence and more capable of self-government than the natives of Cuba, and I am familiar with both races.

DEWEY.

Is this cooperation? He says that he furnished him the means to get arms for his people. That he acted independently it is true, but under the advice of Dewey, and Dewey commends him for the manner in which he is discharging the duty which is expected of him by Dewey and the military commanders that he shall perform.

"They did not expect independence." Why, Mr. Chairman, one of the most pathetic things in the history of all the transactions, in view of what is now said and the contention of people in Congress and of the Administration, is contained in a proclamation of joy which the insurgent representatives in Hongkong sent to the people in the Philippine Islands after the conference with Pratt, after Dewey had gone to Manila to strike the Spaniards. Here it is—a part of it—of the proclamation to the Filipinos from their leaders, the Filipino junta, in Hongkong:

Compatriots, Divine Providence is about to place independence within our reach. The Americans, not from any mercenary motives, but for the sake of humanity, have considered it opportune to extend their protecting mantle to our beloved country. Where you see the American flag flying, assemble in mass. They are our redeemers.

Does that read as if they hoped for independence? But that is not the only significance of this dispatch. Mr. Rounselle Wildman, United States consul at Hongkong, had advised with Aguinaldo throughout, and says himself that he (Wildman) outlined the proclamation Aguinaldo issued to his people. This is his language:

Immediately on the arrival of Aguinaldo at Cavite he issued a proclamation, which I had outlined for him before he left, forbidding pillage and making it a criminal offense to maltreat neutrals. He, of course, organized a government of which he was dictator, an absolutely necessary step if he hoped to maintain control over the natives, and from that date until the present time he has been uninterruptedly successful in the field and dignified and just as the head of his government. According to his own statements to me by letter, he has been approached by both the Spaniards and the Germans, and has had tempting offers made him by the Catholic Church. He has been watched very closely by Admiral Dewey, Consul Williams, and his own junta here in Hongkong, and nothing of moment has occurred which would lead anyone to believe that he was not carrying out to the letter the promises made to me in this consulate.

Here is proof both of abundant cooperation and of the hope and expectation of the Filipinos from the first for independence.

Does it appear that they wanted independence? Were they justified in sending their proclamation from Hongkong? They were justified in every view: by the position we had taken with reference to Cuba, by the solemn promise of the Congress of the United States in reference to Cuba, because they were exactly in the condition that we found the Cubans. They wanted us to assist them to independence and then withdraw.

Does anybody believe any Filipino insurgent or leader thought that our people had any other purpose than that? Does any member believe that Admiral Dewey ever expected anything else to occur? Do you believe that Otis, or any other general in command of the land forces, expected anything else? To have taken a position at the time these difficulties first occurred that we would pursue any other course than that which we pursued toward Cuba would have been an insult to the dignity and fair name of the United States Government. The Administration contends that the Filipinos opened hostilities against us.

To say so is not true. We began them ourselves. We fired the first shot. A soldier from a Kansas regiment fired upon a Filipino patrol between the lines of the American and insurgent forces.

The fire was returned, and a number of the native soldiers were killed. Aguinaldo immediately expressed to General Otis his regret at the occurrence, distinctly disavowed any purpose of hostility, and offered to move his lines back as far as the American commander desired. Honor between men, honor between nations, honor in every sense demanded that this proposal should have been recognized in the interest of peace. But it was not. General Otis made the cruel reply that since the fighting had commenced, it must go on to the bitter end. That end is not yet reached, and Otis is responsible.

Let us look a little further. These things are being done in the name of "benevolent assimilation" and other high-sounding phrases.

The President of the United States appointed his commission and sent them out to the Philippine Islands. That commission reports that the people of the Philippine Islands never dreamed of independence till after the Spaniards had been crushed and we had taken possession of Manila. The records tell you differently. The Singapore Press, reciting interviews between our officials and Aguinaldo, their correctness vouched for by United States Consul-General Pratt, controvert the statement. The proclamation of the Philippine representatives, made public to the world, tell you differently. The very struggle of those people striving for liberty itself gives the lie to the commission's statement.

After the Spaniards had capitulated, but before the treaty was concluded, the President issued a proclamation and sent it over to be promulgated by General Otis. General Otis took a very extraordinary liberty with that proclamation—a liberty which he was justified in taking in the cause of fairness and honesty, and for the purpose of preserving the good name of our country. Whether that was his motive must be ascertained by all that he said and did taken together, but it might well have been. That he did so is not denied. He himself reports the manner in which it was done. What does he say? General Otis reports—

After fully considering the President's proclamation and the temper of the Tagalos, with whom I was daily discussing political problems and the friendly intentions of the United States Government toward them, I concluded that there were certain words and expressions therein [the President's proclamation], such as "sovereignty," "right of cession," and those which directed immediate occupation, etc., which, though most admirably employed and tersely expressive of actual conditions, might be advantageously used by the Tagalo war party to incite widespread hostilities among the natives. The ignorant classes had been taught to believe that certain words, as "sovereignty," "protection," etc., had peculiar meaning disastrous to their welfare and significant of future political domination, like that from which they had recently been freed.

It was my opinion, therefore, that I would be justified in so amending the paper that the beneficent object of the United States Government would be brought clearly within the comprehension of the people, and this conclusion was the more readily reached because of the radical change of the past few days in the constitution of Aguinaldo's government, which could not have been understood at Washington at the time the proclamation was prepared. It was also believed that the proclamation had been induced partially by the suggestions of the naval authorities here, which three weeks previous, and while affairs were in a specific and comparatively quiet state, had recommended "that the President issue a proclamation defining the policy of the United States Government in the Philippine Islands and assuring the inhabitants that it is our intention to interfere as little as possible in the internal affairs of the islands; that as soon as they developed their capability for self-government their powers and privileges will be increased. That will allay the spirit of unrest."

What "beneficent object?" We could only have two purposes—one to assist those people in accordance with our pledge to

the Cubans to establish a free government for themselves and the other to take away from them their liberty. One or the other of these must be our purpose. It developed in the President's proclamation that the purpose of the United States was to take away their liberty. But General Otis says, "We must disguise this purpose; we must so amend this proclamation that the Filipinos will not be misled and the benevolent purpose of the United States be misunderstood."

Why, Mr. Chairman, I can not believe otherwise than that General Otis at the time he took this liberty with the President's proclamation, believed that the language used by the President did not convey the purpose of the Administration. As a liberty-loving man, as a self-respecting American citizen bearing a commission from his Government, he was justified even in taking the position that the President used terms which he did not intend to use. If that was not his understanding, then his words which I have quoted are used as irony.

The sarcasm, the biting, burning sarcasm, with which he blisters the President of the United States in that dispatch amounts to insubordination for which he might have been court-martialed.

But, Mr. Chairman, a peculiar temper pervades the mind of the annexationist of to-day. It is needless to stand here and discuss the analogies between the acquisition of the Philippines and the acquisition of the Louisiana purchase. Why not come up and consider this question upon its merits?

Everybody knows that different reasons existed in the two cases; that different objections obtained. I shall not pause to discuss that phase of the question. The first question is, Do we need the Philippines; and if so, for what purpose? The second is, Have we the right, under the Constitution, to acquire them? And a third question is, If we have the right, and if we have a need for them, can we, under our traditions, under the broad pledge of this great Union of States, under every observance by which we have grown great and strong and mighty as a nation, afford to tear down the beautiful temple of liberty which we ourselves have constructed and make it a waste place and a burying ground for the blasted hopes of humanity—for the dead aspirations of those who have striven for freedom?

The President and his commission would have us believe that the natives—those engaged in resistance to our arms—are brutal and cruel and have no conception of free government, nor desire for it, and that if we withdraw, chaos would follow and lawlessness run riot; that they are incapable of forming a government. To refute this we have not only the direct testimony of Admiral Dewey, but he reports the testimony of officers whom he sent on a tour of inspection of 600 miles in the interior, where the Tagal government was in force.

I shall not go into a discussion of the constitutional questions involved in the Administration's purposes. My object is only to make plain what it is intended shall be done and how, and to expose the insincerity of the motives and plans, that the American people, who must ultimately determine this question for themselves, may know what they are to pass upon. I said a moment ago that a peculiar temper prevails. Men are inspired these days with great contempt for constitutional obstructions. Gentlemen of this House have been busy for weeks and are still engaged in seeking some constitutional sanction for imperialism, for holding

subject provinces by military power. If they fail, and they will, I nevertheless expect to hear them assert it. They should, if they intend to persist in their purpose, be as honest as Mr. Whitelaw Reid. During the summer I received a copy of a speech delivered by him before the Miami University, in Ohio, upon the subject of the duty of the American Government in the Philippine Islands.

Mr. Reid takes up this question of constitutionality and the rights of the United States to acquire territory for purposes other than that of statehood. Under the Constitution, according to the contention of some, and as I myself believe, as interpreted in the decisions rendered by Chief Justice Marshall and followed by the Supreme Court in other decisions, our constitutional power is limited to acquiring territory for statehood. But I care not to discuss that. I am showing now the temper which possesses the minds of men. Mr. Whitelaw Reid takes up these decisions and refers to what Jefferson and Madison said. He comments upon what Senator HOAR has said and upon the decisions of Chief Justices Marshall and Taney, and he uses this startling language. I quote from memory:

I would not by a hair's breadth disparage the weight to be attached to the opinions and decisions of these learned men; but I can not believe that any dispassionate person can read these decisions and opinions in the light of surrounding circumstances and the conditions under which they were rendered and expressed and come to any other conclusion than that they are flimsy as a cobweb.

Behold, Mr. Chairman, a greater than Washington is here, a more profound and learned jurist than Marshall, a greater patriot than Jefferson, a wiser than any of the fathers—the gentleman who assisted in negotiating the treaty with Spain at the dagger's point and wrested from her her poor title to possession which she was not able to maintain against the insurrectionists themselves and to enforce her authority beyond the narrowest limits.

Not only does Mr. Reid say this; he goes further, and makes assertions each more startling and dangerous. I am sorry that I have not here a copy of his address. I tried to procure it, but was unable to find it in the Library or elsewhere. I state it from memory, but I pledge myself to the correctness of its substance, if I do not give it in the exact language, and I can almost do that. In speaking of the purposes of this Government and our possibilities as a nation, he says:

Neither chains forged in the Constitution, nor chains of precedent, nor yet the dead hand of the Father of his Country, whom we all revere, can prevent us as a nation from doing anything that any other nation could do or meeting any emergency which arises or discharging any obligation which imposes.

There you are! What useful function is left for the Constitution?

What is meant, Mr. Chairman, by this? When an emergency arises, the Constitution, if it stand in the way, will be disregarded. If an obligation imposes, we will discharge that obligation without reference to the organic law of the land—throw it aside, just as his colleague and compeers have cast aside the Declaration of Independence and trodden it under foot. We will not be bound by chains forged in the Constitution. We will perform our purpose, whatever that purpose may be.

Mr. Chairman, who is to determine when the emergency arises?

Who is to decide when an obligation is imposed? If we cast ourselves loose from all moorings to constitutional safeguards, then we are left to the opinion of any bare majority which may get control of the affairs of the Government, and in this instance we should be left to the dictation of a class of statesmen whom I for one am unwilling to intrust with the sacred rights of the people unrestrained by "chains forged in the Constitution."

The CHAIRMAN (Mr. ALLEN of Maine). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. CLARK of Missouri. I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman have leave to finish his remarks.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Missouri asks unanimous consent that the gentleman from Arkansas be allowed to finish his remarks. Is there objection?

There was no objection.

Mr. DINSMORE. Are the Filipinos to become citizens under the new order of things, enjoying equal rights with us? Nobody will be bold enough to propose that. Mr. Whitelaw Reid, in the address to which I have referred, says that "it is not to be considered or thought of; they are not fit for it; they can not be made so;" and he holds that they should be held as a subject province under the dominion of the United States, suffering such impositions as we impose upon them, and denied the blessings that are enjoyed by our citizens. Is this Americanism? When did it become so?

Why, Mr. Chairman, the very thing our fathers fought against was taxation without representation. Can it be that England had no right in justice or morals to impose such burdens upon us, who were confessedly her subjects, and that we may honorably and rightly exercise such power over the Filipinos, who have never owed us any kind of allegiance? I am sorry indeed to find people who seem to think so.

Have we already advanced the car of liberty so far that we may now reverse its wheels? Have we done so much for the fair goddess that we may now turn and rend her? Oh, that patriotism might inspire the hearts of Americans with love of country rather than desire for conquest and greed for ill-got gold!

Oh, that our people might be governed now, as in the past, by the one desire to make of this a great proud republic, where peace may ever abide and the happiness of our citizens at home be the chiefest aim, the first purpose of the laws. Shall our flag, that we all love because it has ever been the emblem of liberty, of the universal equality of man, of his right to govern himself, of the immortal principle that government derives its just powers from the consent of the governed, whose bright constellation and flowing stripes remind us of our growth in power and dominion and happiness, while adhering to the safe traditions grown out of the Declaration of Independence—shall it be the ensign that shall float over the heads of people held in subjection to our laws by military power against their will, laws that discriminate against them and deny them participation in the blessings that we enjoy? God preserve it from such disgrace. God restrain our people from the perpetration of such a wrong. God make us strong in the future, as we have been in the past, for the establishment and promotion of liberty in our own land, by the light of our example inspiring it throughout all the world. [Loud applause.]

Mr. BOUFELL of Illinois. I wish to ask the gentleman one question, if he will answer it.

Mr. DINSMORE. With pleasure, if I can.

Mr. BOUTELL of Illinois. There is, of course, a great diversity of opinion among those who are honestly seeking to arrive at a conclusion as to the most honorable course to be pursued in the treatment of the Philippine Islands, both immediately and in the future. Is it the gentleman's view that the United States troops in the Philippines should be immediately withdrawn and leave the Filipinos absolutely to their own devices?

Mr. DINSMORE. Immediately?

Mr. BOUTELL of Illinois. That they be immediately left to their own devices?

Mr. DINSMORE. I do not think they ought to be immediately withdrawn. I have already stated to the House that I think our course with reference to them should be the same as our course was promised to be to Cuba, whether we ever fulfill it or not. I hold that the highest and first duty of the American Government is to our own people, without reference to what may happen to anybody else. [Applause on the Democratic side.]

Mr. BOUTELL of Illinois. I would like to ask the gentleman one further question. Would the gentleman be in favor of the retention of the Philippines at the request of the Filipinos?

Mr. DINSMORE. Oh, well, Mr. Chairman, that is the same question propounded with reference to Cuba.

Mr. BOUTELL of Illinois. I am asking it honestly and sincerely.

Mr. DINSMORE. I would not. If I could be satisfied that a substantial majority of Cubans should desire it, I might be willing to take them; but the Philippines, so remote from us—I care not what may be said about the obliteration of time and distance in communication—and so near to other powers struggling for supremacy in the Orient, I would not be willing to take under any view.

Mr. WILLIAMS of Mississippi. So numerous and so alien.

Mr. DINSMORE. Yes; so filled with people who never can be homogeneous with us. I do not want them. I think they would be an injury rather than a blessing to us.

Mr. BOUTELL of Illinois. Does the gentleman from Arkansas think that if we retained the Philippines with the consent of the Filipinos it would be of commercial advantage or disadvantage to this country?

Mr. DINSMORE. I think it would be an absolute impossibility within years to come for us to know whether we had the consent of the Filipinos, particularly while we are in military occupation. Let me say that I do not care how much they might desire it. I should be opposed ever to taking them, because I think it would be a menace to us and a danger, without compensating advantages.

Mr. BOUTELL of Illinois. I agree with the gentleman that it may be difficult to ascertain the opinion of all the Filipinos; but supposing by a proper plebiscite they should request retention by the United States, does the gentleman think it would be to the advantage or the disadvantage of the United States from a commercial point of view?

Mr. DINSMORE. I do not think it would be of any advantage to us from a commercial point of view. I have already stated that I believe that healthful, desirable, profitable trade follows peace rather than war, thrift rather than force, and that we should maintain relations of peace with the world and adhere to the injunction

of our fathers to keep free from entangling alliances. I believe that an adherence to the Monroe doctrine rather than a departure from it would promote our commerce, our happiness, and our safety.

One more word in closing. Mr. Chairman, I have a horrible fear that if this thing is done, it may be the beginning of the end. It will be done unless prevented by the people in the ensuing election. The decree of the Administration has gone forth. When Americans deprive other people of liberty as they desire it, I tremble for our own. Perhaps the roseate view of my friend from Pennsylvania [Mr. STURLEY] is the correct one, but mine at least accords with history in the past, and his is based only upon hope and pride of race. [Applause.]

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*Thomas Cusack 2000
N. Y. R.*

SHALL AMERICA BECOME A TYRANT NATION?

S P E E C H

OF

HON. THOMAS CUSACK,
OF ILLINOIS,

IN THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1900.

WASHINGTON.

1900.

4272



SPEECH
OF
HON. THOMAS CUSACK.

The House being in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, and having under consideration the bill (H. R. 8450) to regulate the trade of Puerto Rico, and for other purposes :

Mr. CUSACK said:

Mr. CHAIRMAN: The lawyers of this House have spent many days in arguing the technical questions involved in this bill, and gentlemen on this side have presented their legal objections to it. But it needs no lawyer to explain why the bill should not pass. I am utterly opposed to it because I believe in keeping our promises. The man who breaks his word can not hope to have the respect of his neighbors. The nation which breaks its pledges to a weaker people will receive the condemnation of history.

When we entered upon the Spanish war we called upon the world to witness that we took up arms for a high and humane purpose—to relieve the people of the island of Cuba from the murderous oppression and cruelty of Spain. As an incident of that war we occupied Puerto Rico, and the inhabitants of that island offered us no resistance. They welcomed our troops as bringing to them the blessings which we always boasted, go with our flag. The general commanding the Army made to those people the fairest promises ever penned by a hand that carried a sword. What did he say? Listen:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY,
Ponce, Puerto Rico, July 28, 1898.

To the inhabitants of Puerto Rico:

In the prosecution of the war against the Kingdom of Spain by the people of the United States in the cause of liberty, justice, and humanity, its military forces have come to occupy the island of Puerto Rico. They come bearing the banner of freedom, inspired by a noble purpose. They bring you the fostering arm of a nation of free people, whose greatest power is in its justice and humanity to all those living within its fold. * * * to bring you prosperity, and bestow upon you the immunities and blessings of the liberal institutions of our Government. * * * This is not a war of devastation, but one to give to all within the control of its military and naval forces the advantages and blessings of enlightened civilization.

NELSON A. MILES,
Major-General Commanding United States Army.

And following this, President McKinley used almost the same words when he said to Congress:

The highest considerations of justice and good faith demand that we should not disappoint the confident expectation of sharing in our prosperity with which the people of Puerto Rico so gladly transferred their allegiance to the United States; and that we should treat the interests of this people as our own; and I wish most strongly to urge that the customs duties between Puerto Rico and the United States be removed.

How beautiful a picture was here presented, one that would have made glad the hearts of all the lovers of liberty and justice

from the time of those who on these shores first resisted unjust and unequal taxation by the English king.

But the same hard, selfish influences which seem to control everything that the Republicans have done lately have whispered to the Ways and Means Committee that these promises must not be carried out, and in spite of the plain terms of our Constitution, we propose to begin a policy of unequal taxation in our Territories, a policy as different from the spirit of our institutions as darkness is from light.

This is the beginning. What will be the end? Ah, Mr. Chairman, when nations desert the plain path of duty, when the strong oppress the weak for selfish ends, they begin to work their own ruin. In following the example of the greatest tyrant of all the earth, in imitating England's course toward weaker countries, we harm ourselves more than we do those whom we oppress. Are we to treat Puerto Rico as England has treated Ireland? Are we to darken the humble homes of that beautiful little island? One of the witnesses from Puerto Rico, whose testimony is before us, says:

Since the United States has had the occupation, I am sorry to say, we have gone backward; two years ago we were certainly a great deal more prosperous than we are to-day. There is a great deal more poverty than there was two years ago.

Mr. Chairman, our Government is in bad company and following a bad example. During the past two years we have heard a great deal about an understanding between the United States and England, and in Puerto Rico we see our Government doing something very similar to that which England tried to do to the American colonies a century and a quarter ago. Not only that, but our Government, which made such fair pretenses when it went to war with poor old Spain, because that country was unjust to Cuba, seems strangely blind to the cold blooded murder which England is now committing in South Africa.

It is said that England performed some service for us during the Spanish war. I ask any man to point out what that service was, when it was performed, where it was performed, and by whom? Our State Department is now presided over by a man fresh from the flattery and social attentions of English drawing-rooms. Is it not a strange and humiliating coincidence that almost as soon as England began her attack upon the Boers, the American consul to the Boer Republic, who protested against English meddling with his official mail, should be removed and our late ambassador to England should send his own son instead?

Mr. Macrum, who has been so summarily and mysteriously displaced, to be succeeded by the son of our Secretary of State, is too old-fashioned in his ideas of freedom and independence to suit the spirit of these times, it seems. He says:

I had the humiliation, as the representative of the American Government, of sitting in my office in Pretoria and looking upon envelopes bearing the official seal of the American Government opened and officially sealed with a sticker, notifying me that the contents had been read by the censor at Durban. * * * When I accepted my post as consul I knew nothing of any secret alliance between America and Great Britain.

Mr. Chairman, what a spectacle is here presented! It has been our boast that whatever other nations did we at least were the friends of freedom everywhere. But now we are blind to the crimson streams of South Africa and deaf to the roar of English cannon. In the war now raging there we see a plain, free republic, such as ours once was, struggling against the greatest robber

of all the ages, who simply says: "Your gold and diamonds or your lives; and I think, as you are in the way, I'll take your lives anyway!"

In all the history of the world there is no sight more pitiful than that of the heroic Boers, fighting like the humble heroes they are against overwhelming numbers. Who can read the story of those people and not be moved to admiration and to indignation?

When English oppression in Cape Colony became unbearable to the liberty-loving Boers many years ago, they asked the English Government, "What do you claim to be the northernmost boundary of English territory in South Africa?" The English Government replied, "Our northernmost boundary is the Vaal River." "Very well," responded the Boers, "we will leave our homes and the graves of our fathers and go beyond the Vaal, and all we wish there is to be let alone."

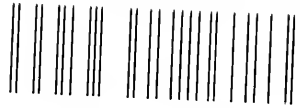
They went, and, as if to warn them of future danger, every night on their long journey they had to post sentinels to protect their flocks and herds from the attacks of the cowardly and treacherous lions which are England's emblem, and which well illustrate her methods, always skulking on the outskirts, ready to pounce upon the helpless.

Beyond the Vaal, in a country too poor to tempt even England's greed, these sturdy people established their new home and set up a republic as simple as ours used to be. If gold and diamonds had not been discovered there, they might yet be at peace on their quiet farms and have no use for their rifles except in the noble art of the chase. But now they are being held up, the victims of the great highwayman of the world; and while every man who loves justice must admire the Boers for their plucky defense of home and country, our Government stands idly by, not offering to make a protest, not even trying, in a friendly way, to stop the unequal conduct.

If we were justified in armed intervention against Spain, fighting from motives of national pride to maintain her ancient rule in countries which for centuries had been hers, how much more do national honor and good conscience impel us to use all peaceable means to stop a warfare, merciless and hateful, waged from motives of national greed on the one side against a brave, free people in a sister republic on the other!

Are not our proposed injustice toward Puerto Rico and our indifference to England's wanton attack on the South African Republic the visible signs of the beginning of a policy on our part which will inevitably land us among the tyrant powers of the earth? And will not all liberty-loving men in this country rise up and repudiate an Administration which places us in such disgraceful company?

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